

# Household Medical Waste Disposal

## Chatham, NJ

FDA worked with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to develop the first consumer guidance for proper disposal of prescription drugs. Issued by ONDCP in February 2007 and updated in October 2009, the federal guidelines are summarized here:

- \* Follow any specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompanies the medication. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless this information specifically instructs you to do so.
- \* Take advantage of community drug take-back programs that allow the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. The Drug Enforcement Administration, working with state and local law enforcement agencies, also sponsors National Prescription Drug Take Back Days throughout the United States.

Source: [www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm101653.htm](http://www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm101653.htm)

## Prescription Drug Disposal Options

- \* “MedReturn” Box, located in the lobby of the Madison Police Headquarters at 62 Kings Road, Madison, NJ 07940. Residents and nonresidents may anonymously dispose of unwanted or expired prescription drugs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Accepted items for disposal include prescriptions, prescription patches, prescription medications, prescription ointments, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, medication samples and medications for pets. Items that are *not* accepted include needles (sharps), thermometers, hydrogen peroxide, inhalers, aerosol cans, medication from businesses or clinics and ointments, lotions or liquids.

- \* Chatham Borough and Township Police Departments are working on Take Back events and other drop off options and will inform the community when they become available.

## Sharps Disposal Options

- \* Morristown Medical Center, at 100 Madison Avenue, Morristown, NJ 07960, accepts used sharps in appropriate containers at no charge. Sharps disposal containers are available on site, or you can use coffee cans or rigid plastic laundry bottles with lids. Call 973-971-4177 for details.

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### Sharps Disposal Options (continued)

- \* Liberty Drug, at 195 Main Street, Chatham 07928, accepts used sharps in appropriate containers. There is a fee for sharps not purchased at Liberty Drug. Call 973-635-6200 for details.
- \* Check with your physician or veterinarian regarding their policy on returning used sharps.

### Inhaler Disposal Options

Traditionally, many inhalers have contained chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's), a propellant that damages the protective ozone layer. The CFC inhalers are being phased out and replaced with more environmentally friendly inhalers.

- \* If a CFC inhaler is empty, it can be thrown into the garbage. As with any prescription though, first be sure to remove identifying information regarding the prescription.
- \* If a CFC inhaler still has content, it is considered hazardous waste and should be disposed of at Morris County's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility in Mt. Olive. The county also holds HHW events throughout the year at area facilities. Call 973-631-5109 with questions or to schedule an appointment for drop off at the permanent facility. You can also visit their website: [www.mcmua.com/sw\\_hhw.asp](http://www.mcmua.com/sw_hhw.asp)

### Mercury Thermometer Disposal Options

- \* When disposing of a glass mercury thermometer, it is considered hazardous waste and should be disposed of at Morris County's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility in Mt. Olive. The county also holds HHW events throughout the year. Call 973-631-5109 with questions or to schedule an appointment for drop off at the permanent facility. You can also visit their website: [www.mcmua.com/sw\\_hhw.asp](http://www.mcmua.com/sw_hhw.asp)
- \* If a glass mercury thermometer is broken, ventilate the area and use latex (or rubber) gloves with paper towels, an eyedropper if necessary - never a brush or vacuum - to clean up the mercury and glass, then triple bag it in plastic bags (i.e. Ziploc) and contact Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority (MCMUA) at 973-631-5109. Visit MCMUA's website for more details: [www.mcmua.com/sw\\_hhw\\_faq\\_mercury.asp](http://www.mcmua.com/sw_hhw_faq_mercury.asp)